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COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST-RELATED DECISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS, INCLUDING AN EXAMINATION OF SECTORAL AND CROSS-SECTORAL LINKAGES

Note verbale dated 5 February 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations has the honour to transmit the final report of the International Workshop on Integrated Application of Sustainable Forest Management Practices** held in Kochi, Japan, from 22 to 25 November 1996.

The Workshop was co-sponsored by the Governments of Japan, Canada, Malaysia and Mexico, in partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the International Tropical Timber Organization and with the assistance of the Kochi Prefectural Government. The Workshop was attended by 155 participants from 36 countries from every region of the world, and from several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Workshop focused on sustainable forest management practices at the field level, in order to distil lessons and experience which might provide some insight to the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the Commission for Sustainable Development when it formulates recommendations at its fourth session, which will be held from 11 to 21 February 1997.

In this connection, it would be appreciated if the Secretary-General would make arrangements to circulate the attached report as an official document of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. In addition to the English version, the French version is attached hereto.

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* E/CN.17/IPF/1997/1.

** The report is circulated in the languages of submission only.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATEDAPPLICATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION

An International Workshop on Integrated Application of Sustainable Forest Management Practices was held in Kochi, Japan, from 22-25 November, 1996.

The workshop was co-sponsored by the Governments of Japan, Canada, Malaysia and Mexico, in partnership with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Tropical Timber Organization and with the assistance of the Kochi prefectural government. The workshop was attended by 155 participants from 36 countries in all geographical regions, and from several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Participants attended the meeting in their personal capacity as experts from diverse backgrounds: public servants, field level managers, environmentalists, researchers, planners, and academics.

The workshop focused on sustainable forest management practices at the field level, in order to distill lessons and experience which could provide some insight to the IPF when it formulates recommendations at its fourth session, 11-21 February, 1997. The workshop specifically examined practical and field level aspects of two issues drawn from the deliberations of the IPF related to its Program Elements I.1: Progress through national forest and land-use programmes; I.3: Traditional forest-related knowledge; II: International co-operation on financial assistance and technology transfer; III.1(a): Assessment of the multiple benefits of all types of forests; III.1(b): Methodologies for proper valuation of the multiple benefits of forests; and III.2: Criteria and Indicators for sustainable forest management. These issues are:

- integrating forest planning into the wider context of land-use planning;
- integrating research findings into sustainable forest management.

The workshop was opened by Mr. Hajimu Irisawa, Director-General of the Forestry Agency of Japan, following a welcome address by Mr. Daijiro Hashimoto, Governor of Kochi Prefecture. A short address was delivered by Ambassador Noboru Nakahira, who with Dr. Satohiko Sasaki served as Co-Chairmen of the workshop. A presentation was made by Dr. J.S. Maini,

Co-ordinator and Head of the IPF secretariat at the U.N., who was invited to situate the deliberations of the workshop in the context of the work of the IPF.

The discussions at the workshop benefited from the outputs of two previous closely related initiatives, namely the Expert consultation on Implementing the Forest Principles; Promotion of National Forest and Land Use Programmes, organized by the Government of Germany, in Feldafing, Germany 16-21 June, 1996, and the Intergovernmental Workshop of Experts on Sustainable Forestry and Land-Use; The Process of Consensus Building, organized by the Governments of Sweden and Uganda in Stockholm, 14-18 October, 1996.

This report which is submitted to IPF, will be part of a comprehensive report of the workshop consisting of a summary of the proceedings, 12 case studies, two synthesis reports on them and several other papers.

BACKGROUND

For several years there have been a series of actions which have attempted to provide a framework designed to create a common or at least compatible and comparable set of measures to make progress towards sustainable forest management.

The decision to organize this workshop arose from the need to relate broad international policies to their practical application at the field level. That way, it is possible to explore and test the combination of factors - political, cultural, social, economic and ecological - which offer the best possible chance to show progress toward sustainable forest management. The methods of analysis chosen were through case studies, covering a wide variety of circumstances and from a range of geographical areas of eco-zones. A diverse multi-disciplinary group of experts were engaged to provide insights by distilling the lessons and experiences form the case studies which demonstrate the practical application of measures of sustainable forest management which are required at the international, regional, national and at the field levels.

There is general agreement that to be effective, field level activities, national level policies and international measures need to be closely interlinked. In recent years, some progress has been observed in translating the concept of sustainable forest management into national level policies. There have been some important developments in this regard, such as the preparation of national forest programmes, the formulation of criteria and indicators, and the results of research undertaken to identify some solutions to the problems of forests. Whilst progress has been made in translating these policies and programmes to field level practices, much still remains to be done. Conversely, field level experiences have not always been incorporated into the formulation of national and international policies and measures for the achievement of sustainable forest management.

The deliberations of the workshop took place in plenary and group discussions. They began with formal case study presentations related to the two themes and general discussions on common issues. These common issues (which have also been identified in IPF deliberations) are the following):

- social (participation by major stakeholders [1])
- economic (financial and other resource needs)
- policy (availability of an appropriate institutional framework) and
- technical (environmentally sound technologies, eco-system management)

The objective of the workshop was to generate practicable ideas. These are formulated into a series of "Proposals for Action" at the field level and within the context of the international policy dialogue at the IPF. These proposals for action are formulated to be both specific to the topics and to contribute to the wider understanding of sustainable forest management. The issues and measures which emerge from the proposals for action must be considered in a practical and integrated way.

1 Stakeholders are any individuals or groups which have a vested interest in the forest.

PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

1. The New Culture on Research and Land Use Planning

A new "culture" on land use planning and forest research and extension recognizes and accepts that integration on a wide variety of environmental, social and economic values, needs and aspirations is essential to achieve sustainable forest management practices. This new culture will only thrive in a democratic and transparent environment.

The new culture recognizes the linkages between the field level and the international level forestry sector. This new culture involved institutional changes and linkages including new mechanisms for decision-making and provides an interface with the public. Decentralization and partnership provide increased opportunities for trust, consensus, and communication among stakeholders. These are the means for the consideration of unique local, geographical and cultural situations and traditional forest-related knowledge in land use planning and research.

Research in this new culture is stakeholder-drive, focused and practical. Planning is iterative between planning levels and evolutionary over time; it results in implementation of planning decisions.

The products of this emerging culture will be a new generation of applied research and its inclusion in all levels of planning processes is an important supportive tool necessary for achieving sustainable forest management.

2. RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

Research should be multi-disciplinary to cover all aspects of the topic, including where necessary, participation by other relevant sectors.

Consideration must be given to reforming the reward and incentive structure for forest research and extension. This may involve:

- providing opportunities for stakeholders to do their own research, including research on the application of traditional knowledge;
- developing rewards and incentives for extension agents to achieve positive results;
- developing rewards and incentives for conducting applied, multi-disciplinary and participatory research.

Participation

Research and extension must seek to involve all stakeholders at all levels and stages on a collaborative basis. The identification of research problems and priorities by stakeholders increases the relevance and impact of the work carried out and thus further the goal of sustainable forest management.

Educate stakeholders in their rights and opportunities for participation in research. Information should be presented in a language appropriate to the target audience.

Research has important implications for the development and application of indicators. Conversely, criteria and indicators are important tools for research in the monitoring and feedback process used.

Field Application

Traditional and local forest-related knowledge are vital components of the planning and research process. They should be collected, stored and evaluated in collaboration with the holders of the knowledge and with their approval. They should be collated with research information and should be incorporated into the process where appropriate.

For greater impact and relevance, research should also be extended from on-station to on-site, involving stakeholders in implementation and demonstration .

Special care must be taken to ensure that technologies to be generated and transferred are well adapted to local ecological, social and economic conditions.

3. LAND USE PLANNING

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Participation

Land use planning must actively seek to involve all stakeholders at all levels (national, sub-national and local) and stages (design, implementation, monitoring).

Essential features of participatory land use planning include:

- appropriate planning levels for the nature and scope of the decisions being made;
- increased stakeholder awareness of their rights and opportunities for participation in land use planning;
- planning and decision-making undertaken in the context of the legal and constitutional framework and traditional land tenure systems;
- use of the appropriate planning and research mechanisms and an understood terminology;
- the recognition that planning is an iterative between planning levels, is evolutionary over time and results in the implementation of planning decisions and results;
- the planning framework includes specific mechanisms for monitoring , feedback and adaptive management.

Assessment of forest values

There are a multitude of forest values (ecological, social, economic, and cultural). A full assessment of forest values will identify these multiple uses of forests and might help to achieve a more equitable distribution of benefits, costs and responsibilities. Sustainable forest management practices require simultaneous management of these diverse values. Some of these values are quantifiable, but others are not. Concerning the assessment of forest values the following actions are required:

- forest values unquantifiable in monetary terms, should be assessed using mutually agreed innovative methodologies and such assessments should be taken into consideration in the planning processes;
- there is a need for research to develop further the methodologies for the measurement of forest values;
- accessible biophysical, social and economic information bases that encompass the full range of forest values, including local and indigenous values, should be developed from these assessments and valuation exercises.

4. INTEGRATING LAND USE PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

Critical features of the new culture are the relationships within and between land use planning, research and extension. These relationships may be both formal (e.g. institutional) or informal.

The new culture for research and land use planning involves bringing additional information to the process, covering the multitude of forest values and other information which exist at field level.

There is a need to:

- develop mechanisms to ensure that at all stages of the decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation cycle, the input from the researchers and other stakeholders should be timely and continuous;
- ensure that the processes and mechanisms are transparent, meaningful, and informed with the active participation of stakeholders in the cycle;
- develop further the role of networking in the exchange and sharing of information;
- enhance communication and provide greater opportunities for feedback;
- test and develop appropriate methods to implement and demonstrate this integration;
- provide adequate time and human and financial resources to achieve this integration.

5. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Both developing and developed countries have limited capacity and resources to deal adequately with the complex issues associated with sustainable forest management practices. International cooperation is

critical to achieve the collective objective of sustainable forest management and land use planning worldwide.

International cooperation is required to:

- support and strengthen the capacity to implement sustainable forest management practices within the new culture for forest research, extension and land use planning;
- promote national capabilities and pooling of resources to conduct research and extension and land use planning by involving relevant international organizations, NGOs and bilateral and multilateral funding agencies;
- facilitate the exchange of information at the cross-sectoral, national, regional and international levels. Research and international organizations should be encouraged to compile syntheses of priority research topics.